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Social Progress



Responsible Freedom

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From This Vantage Point

IN THIS issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS we discuss Calvin's contribution to human freedom in terms of both concept and theology. Our discussion leader, the author of the scholarly presentation on pages 5-32, is Graydon E. McClellan, Executive Director of the Department of the Ministry of the National Council of Churches.

To affirm the sovereignty of God is to assert man's duty to be loyal to God above all. This duty is also man's right, and herein is the ground of our civil freedom. Mr. McClellan analyzes the bearing of Calvinistic thought in its many aspects upon the issues of loyalty and freedom today. His treatise is a good illustration of the application of theological insight to the issues of life and, even more, of a practical man's need of theology in understanding and dealing with the problems of his time.

We believe that "Sons of Calvin" is virtually "must" reading for church officers and other leaders in the educational and service arm of our churches, who should be expected to understand the witness of our church's heritage of concern for liberty. New members also, especially those coming by letters of transfer from other churches, can read the McClellan piece with profit—they need to know the kind of church they are getting into.

A few leaders will disagree with the sweeping indictment of some aspects of American life in the last chapter of Mr. McClellan's presentation. Others will find his criticism of the loyalty oath approach to national security refreshing. By his thorough study of our Calvinistic background, the author has earned a unique right to speak on this matter.

Before coming to his present assignment with the National Council of Churches several months ago, Mr. McClellan spent a year as an Ecumenical Fellow in the Program of Advanced Religious Study at Union Theological Seminary, in New York. During this period he was related to the staff of the Department of Social Education and Action as the director of an institute on responsible freedom. As minister of the Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles (1953-1957), Mr. McClellan achieved a wide reputation as a vigorous and responsible leader of Christian social concern.

—*The SEA Staff*

Sons of Calvin

and

RESPONSIBLE FREEDOM

Introduction: Freedom, Loyalty, and Presbyterians

PRESBYTERIANS of the contemporary scene are a puzzle to the friendly observer and an embarrassment to themselves in the matter of dissent and legislated conformity.

"Letter to Presbyterians"

It was the "Letter to Presbyterians," dated October 21, 1953, and circulated by the General Council of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which helped jolt the nation out of a hypnotic trance induced by the guilt-by-association spectacles which had flared across the land under the management of self-appointed "loyalty czars." It was the Presbytery of Los Angeles, which, in September, 1954,

viewed the current loyalty oath requirement for church tax exemption as an unnecessary and unintended suspicion cast upon one of the traditionally most loyal segments of our society; as a movement of the state into the hitherto free area of men's minds and loyalties; and an unfortunate and unfruitful social irritant at a time when all our forces should be

united to resist such totalitarianisms as communism and to make more effective our free American way of democratic life.

Yet—

Yet it was a Presbyterian session of elders who harried their pastor until he resigned, because he publicly defended the "Letter to Presbyterians."

It was a Presbyterian layman, actively devoted to his church and highly placed in its organized program, who exclaimed one day during a General Assembly meeting, "They say that McCarthy uses rough methods, but tell me of one person he has hurt, except a communist." This was his defensive response to the public caution of his Moderator and Presbyterian senior statesman, John Mackay, that frantic anticommunism can become as idolatrous a faith as communism itself.

And it is a Presbyterian elder who, as a California legislator, has been among those most trusting of

legislated loyalty and most aggressive in pressing the loyalty oath as a means of security.

Which Is Presbyterian?

Which is Presbyterian? The official cautions and pronouncements of the agencies and courts of the denomination, made with nearly equal numbers of clergy and laity voting after democratic debate, or these not atypical responses and attitudes of sincere and often ecclesiastically literate laymen?

Merely to have to ask the question is to indict a great denomination for not keeping its constituency aware of the giant theological and historical rocks from which they were hewn. Calvinists in our Western world have been the well-tutored builders of a society that was both responsible and free. On the one hand regarding civic order as a proper expression of God's will for the social organism and being passionately committed to the doing of that will as they have understood it, and on the other hand suspecting the character of a man, be he ruler or peasant, just because he is man, and thus doubting any monarch's or legislator's pretensions at purity of intention or infallibility of judgment, Calvinists have had both an instinctive predilection for responsible citizenship and a congenital contempt for tyranny.

"Loyal Rebels"

Historically Calvinists might be described as "loyal rebels," and neither the adjective nor the noun can be minimized without neglecting the uniqueness of the Calvinist contribution to our American culture.

Calvinists betray their heritage when they leave politics to the morally less immaculate. In like manner, they lose something of their true character when they panic in the face of threatened tyranny from without the nation and abdicate their leadership for freedom to those within the nation who are enamored of the authoritarian idea, with its inherent distrust of dissent and its affinity for inquisition.

To Avoid Impertinent Substitutes

Therefore this writing aims at reminding Americans of Calvinist descent, and Presbyterians in particular, of the Calvinist contribution to American concepts of freedom and representative government; at renewing their intuitive understanding of the anguished (and sometimes untidy) surge for freedom in vast areas of the world today; and at urging them not to give away their crucial votes on civil liberty and security to the all too eager proxies who are unprepared to understand the essential nature of the free way of life. It is not intended, however, that we should ignore or minimize the very "real and present danger" of communism to our free system, which system has on the whole provided a social climate compatible with the growth of the church. Indeed, it is exactly *because* of the evils of repression which modern communism has etched so clearly for modern man to see that we Americans must return to our social and spiritual fundamentals and carefully avoid impertinent and dangerous substitutes.

It would help if we would take a look at John Calvin at this point.

I

John Calvin's Concept of a Free Church

WE ARE so much accustomed to thinking of sixteenth-century John Calvin as one who practiced enforced religious conformity that we miss the fact that it was his branch of the Reformation movement that demanded and won an independent role for the church. We know that he made the Genevans line up and profess an orthodox faith or get out of town. We fail to realize, however, that even as this child of his time was picking up where the Roman Catholic Church left off with the idea that all people of the community must have the same religious beliefs, he was also hammering out a theological system and an ecclesiastical polity that would nurture precious concepts of conscientious dissent, of freedom from tyranny, and of representative government, which would become highly characteristic of American social thought today.

Church and State

We should caution ourselves that when we begin with Calvin's thought, we begin not with a maturely worked out plan for church-state relations, but with the developing battle strat-

egy of a remarkably successful ecclesiastical general whose main goals were formulated in terms of a fixed basic philosophy, but whose detailed campaign objectives turned out to have unsuspected elasticity and adaptability. *That God's name should be honored in man's social life, and that the church should have a basic independence from tyranny, political or ecclesiastical, were fundamental principles.* Some of what he wrote about church-state relations, however, and much of what was the Genevan pattern in this realm, represent his experimentation with these principles in the contemporary situation, or at times perhaps only an uncertain settlement in his struggle toward a more ideal relationship. Calvin's famous *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is not a prospectus of the ecclesiastico-political system which he intended to sell to the world, nor is Geneva the definitive Calvinistic pattern for all church-state relationships. We must remember that, despite his great interest in the common life of the elect, Calvin was more ecclesiastical than political, and that, despite the "Cal-

vin" stamp on much of Geneva's social structure, that city was more obstreperous than supine regarding many of the Reformer's proposals.

Place of Civil Government

The natural starting point with Calvin's thought is his concept of the place of civil government in the order of things. With Luther he acknowledged that government is necessary because of the sin of man. For example, early in his last chapter of the *Institutes*, where he deals with civil government, he impatiently and rather contemptuously brushes aside the arguments of those who would say that, now that man is more inclined toward morality, government is no longer needed.

Here they betray not only their ignorance, but their diabolical pride, in boasting of perfection, of which not the smallest particle can be discovered in them. (IV. xx. 5.)*

In the same vein he has already said,

They foolishly imagine a perfection which can never be found in any community of men. (IV. xx. 2.)

Bringing to bear the full weight of his teaching of the total depravity of man on the subject elsewhere he says of anarchy,

We should be simply like beasts if there was no principality, if there was neither justice nor rule; we should not be simply like savage beasts, but much worse.

Even the beasts have a certain orderliness about their life which fallen man would neglect had he no government.

Nevertheless, beyond this hard opinion of man there is a *glory* in Calvin's teaching on government. He rejects any theory that the state is a despicable but sadly necessary hangman.

Yet this distinction does not lead us to consider the whole system of civil government as a polluted thing, which has nothing to do with Christian men. . . . But as we have just suggested that this kind of government is distinct from that spiritual and internal reign of Christ, so it ought to be known that *they are in no respect at variance with each other.* (IV. xx. 2.)

Calvin is careful to place the stamp of the divine on civil government. In his opinion, God is the common Creator of the Christian state as well as of the Christian church. Referring to the apostles of anarchy as he imagines them, Calvin describes thus their criticism of government:

Infatuated and barbarous men madly endeavor to subvert this ordinance established by God. (IV. xx. 1.)

He goes on to say,

The Lord has not only testified that the function of magistrates has his approbation and acceptance, but has eminently commended it to us, by dignifying it with the most honorable titles. (IV. xx. 4.)

He then gives his Scriptural authorities, the clearest being Prov. 8: 15-16:

By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

A Fundamental Separation of Church and State

Regarding the distinct separation of church and state, modern Presbyterians find Calvin exceedingly distressing at first. Even upon mature

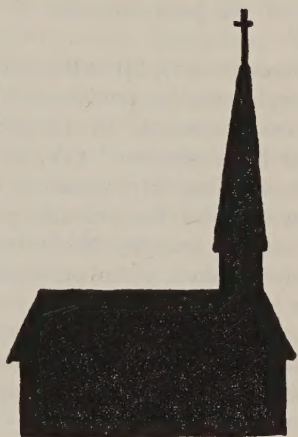
* References in parentheses are to book, chapter, and paragraph of John Allen's translation of John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. The Westminster Press, Italics are the author's.

thought they must maintain that at crucial points there is an irreconcilable difference between Calvin's opinions and our present cherished views of toleration and liberty. *Nevertheless, this must not blind us to the fact that Calvin wrote a fundamental separation of church and state into his system, and that he personally exhibited this separation both in the routine affairs and the dramatic crises of his city.* He himself would have denied that this was separation, and his interpretation was to make much grief for the world. Yet one cannot escape the fact, that the pattern of church-state relations found in his writings and in Genevan affairs created such a sense of independence in the Reformed churches and so strong a rejection of the use of temporal power by the churches as to demand far greater freedom from any state alliance than Calvin and some of his followers could have imagined. Therefore, regardless of the so-called "theocratic" ideal that kept threading its way through Calvinistic thought, and despite certain historical situations where a Reformed alliance with the state seemed to obliterate many distinctions between church and state, men born and bred on Calvin's ideas increasingly demanded some form of church-state separation, at times even against the wishes of entrenched ecclesiastical leaders of their own group.

Calvin's dream (which large numbers of his descendants reluctantly gave up only after history continually refused to be servant to their aspirations) was that of an independent church working in close cooperation with a state that would

know both its own divine origin and its obligation to a divinely established church.

With both institutions recognizing a certain practical unity by reason of



their common origin and common allegiance, Calvin expected the state to honor the integrity of the church by recognizing its autonomy in spiritual affairs and the church to respect the divine commission of the state by not assuming the powers of the sword.

The church does not assume to itself what belongs to the magistrate, nor can the magistrate execute that which is executed by the church. (IV. xi. 3.)

Each would support the other. The state would be concerned that the pure gospel be preached, and the church would be concerned that politics be moral and that the magistrate be obeyed.

Purging the Church

The state's support of the church was to be a very active thing.

This civil government is designed, as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God,

to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the church. (IV. xx. 2.)

Calvin clearly expected the state to use the power of the sword "to preserve the pure doctrine of religion."

Indeed, he says, "It is the duty of the magistrate, by punishment and corporeal coercion, to purge the church from offenses." (IV. xi. 3.) It becomes quickly apparent that Calvin accepted the prevailing and long-standing presupposition that all religion within a given political division *must* be uniform.

For its part in the mutual support, the church was to urge obedience to the magistrate as a recognition of his divine appointment.

"Our Duty to Be Obedient"

For if it be his pleasure to appoint kings over kingdoms, and senators or other magistrates over free cities, it is our duty to be obedient to any governors whom God has established over the places in which we reside. (IV. xx. 8.)

(Note the variety of forms of government which Calvin regards as legitimate and divinely sanctioned.) Obedience is due even to unfaithful rulers. Calvin urges his followers

to submit to the government, not only of those princes who discharge their duty to us with becoming integrity and fidelity, but of all who possess the sovereignty, even though they perform none of the duties of their function (IV. xx. 25).

The people are not to rebel, whether they covet another type of government "where liberty is regulated with becoming moderation, and properly established on a durable basis" (IV. xx. 8) or "are inhumanly harassed by a cruel prince" (IV. xx. 29). As we shall see below,

this would not be the last word Calvin had to say on resistance to tyranny. Yet *the main thrust of his teaching regarding civil authority was an emphasis upon obedience.* He dreaded civil disorder as a worse evil even than social injustice, which later he felt God would ultimately correct.

Built-in Leaks

Yet at the same time that Calvin constructed an apparently airtight philosophy of church-state collaboration against heresy and called for a religion-instituted obedience to all civil authority, he expressed his philosophy in such a way as actually to provide built-in leaks, which were to have great significance in the years to come.

"The Difference . . . Is Very Great"

First of all, Calvin emphasized the *difference* between church and state. He rejected the Zwinglian concept that church and state should be joined in one organization. The spiritual mission of the church required a distinctly different organizational structure peculiar to itself. Calvin points up this difference in his discussion of coercion. He speaks of "the great distinction . . . between the ecclesiastical and civil power," and then illustrates the distinction.

For the church has no power of the sword to punish or to coerce, no authority to compel, no prisons, fines, or other punishments, like those inflicted by the civil magistrate. Besides, the object of this power is, not that he who has transgressed may be punished against his will but that he may profess his repentance by a voluntary submission to chastisement. *The difference therefore is very great; because the church does not assume to itself what belongs to the magistrate, nor can the*

magistrate execute that which is executed by the church. (IV. xi. 3.)

Calvin is careful that, in calling upon the civil government to curb blasphemies and "other offenses against religion," he be not interpreted as calling in the magistrate to run the church.

Nor let any one think it strange that I now refer to human polity the charge of the due maintenance of religion, which I may appear to have placed beyond the jurisdiction of men. *For I do not allow men to make laws respecting religion and the worship of God now, any more than I did before;* though I approve of civil government, which provides that the true religion which is contained in the law of God, be not violated, and polluted by public blasphemies, with impunity. (IV. xx. 3.)

Calvin was prepared to do battle for this distinction between the church and the magisterial institutions. When that important civil body, the Little Council of Geneva, wanted to reserve the power of excommunication to itself, the Reformer wrote to Viret,

I immediately replied that such a decree could only be ratified by my death or banishment.

In like spirit he was indignant at "the blasphemies" that named Henry VIII of England "sovereign of the church."

"The Magistrate . . . Even Deserves to Be Chastised"

Second, Calvin insisted that the church control admission to and conduct of the Lord's Supper. Referring in the *Institutes* to the fact that it is the business of the civil magistrate to punish a citizen guilty of drunkenness or fornication (which punishment is not the province of the church), he asks:

Will the church stop here? Such persons cannot be admitted to the sacred supper without doing an injury to Christ and to his holy institution.

The church is thus expected to exclude such persons from the Lord's Supper as *its* discipline, and the church must seek to persuade the offender to repentance before re-admission to Communion.

Calvin meant business when he insisted that the church control the conduct of the Lord's Supper. He dramatically attested to this by his actions just prior to his banishment from Geneva in 1538. The issue of the church's freedom from civil dominance had reached the acute stage the week before Easter. One of Calvin's preachers, Coraud, had been summoned by the city fathers for critical statements in his sermon and forbidden to preach. The next day Calvin and his friend Farel defied the Council by refusing the latter's demand that they administer Communion according to the Bernese form. On the second day Coraud preached and was promptly clapped into prison. The fathers tried to dicker but the Reformers chose to fight out the question then and there as to who controlled the preaching and the administering of the sacraments.

On Saturday the Council sent the sheriff, instructing Calvin to preach and administer the Communion next day according to the form outlined in a letter from neighboring Bern. Refusing, he was forbidden to preach. An excited populace tried to intimidate the preachers that night by firing muskets outside their doors and threatening them with a bath in the Rhone. Nonetheless, the next day,

Easter, both Calvin and Farel preached in defiance of the prohibition and refused to administer Communion to the rioters. A general council of the citizens angrily voted on Tuesday to banish the two leaders. "Very well," replied Calvin when the sheriff brought the order, "had we served men we should have been ill rewarded, but we serve a great master who will give us our reward."

When Calvin was recalled to Geneva, it was on his terms, and he promptly set about regularizing the independence of the church in the pulpit and at the table.

"Not to Be Spared by the Pastors"

Third, as is quite evident in the above account, Calvin insisted upon a free pulpit. He defended the right of the preachers to reprove the people from the pulpit, denying that this is a right reserved to the rulers. Indeed, he regarded a free pulpit as a necessary corrective even for royal personages who were inclined to take their superior station too personally.

For great kings ought not to think it any dishonor to prostrate themselves as suppliants before Christ the King of kings, nor ought they to be displeased at being judged by the church. As they hear scarcely any thing in their courts but mere flatteries, it is the more highly necessary for them to receive correction from the Lord by the mouth of his *ministers*; they ought even to wish not to be spared by the *pastors*, that they may be spared by the Lord. (IV. xii. 7.)

On some points where he had strong convictions Calvin did not have his way regarding church and state in Geneva. He never was permitted by the civil authorities, for

example, the frequency of Communion he considered desirable for proper spiritual nourishment. And the Little Council controlled the selection of elders for the Consistory, could dismiss them through the means of an annual review, and insisted on calling them "commissioners and deputies of the Council to the Consistory."

On the freedom of the pulpit, however, he was successful to a large degree, being able to preserve from jealous legislators a highly independent status for the preachers. He always insisted upon the complete liberty of the pastors in their preaching before the general citizenry *and* the magistrates. He reminds all that in the church the one sovereign authority is the Word of God and that

"neither the sacrificers nor the kings nor the princes nor their council" are exempt from obedience to it "any more than other" [folk].

He claimed the rights of the great prophets of Scripture fame for his preachers, and he urged this claim at a time when freedom of the press was not even imagined.

The Ordinances which Calvin finally got the rulers to approve did require a kind of loyalty oath to the Little Council in the part of the preachers, but it is interesting to see where the Council was placed in the swearing, and how the loyalty was qualified. Sworn allegiance was given first to God and the Word, second to the church Ordinances, third to the Little Council, and

fourth to the statutes of the city, "but without prejudice to the liberty which we ought to have of teaching according as God commands us."

The Reformed preachers, it can be

readily seen, were expected to preach not what was necessarily pleasing to dignitaries, but rather what was pertinent to Scripture.

Rulers Dare Not Be Counterfeit

Fourth, though extolling the high place of magistrates in God's order for man, and ringing the changes on civil obedience, Calvin nevertheless laid the groundwork for critical appraisal of an unworthy ruler by warning the latter of the judgment of God upon his unfaithful ways. It was not to be too long before the followers of Calvin would regard themselves as agents of this divine justice. With their hearts sore under royal oppression, they would read these inflammatory words of the Reformer:

With what audacity will they pronounce an unjust sentence with that mouth which they know to be the destined organ of divine truth? With what conscience will they subscribe to impious decrees with that hand which they know to be appointed to register the edicts of God? In short, if they remember that they are the viceregents of God, it behoves them to watch with all care, earnestness, and diligence, that in their administration they may exhibit to men an image, as it were, of the providence, care, goodness, benevolence, and justice of God. And they must constantly bear this in mind, that if in all cases "he be cursed that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully," *a far heavier curse awaits those who act fraudulently in a righteous calling.* (IV. xx. 6.)

The Door Ajar on Civil Disobedience

Fifth, and perhaps most important, Calvin seriously qualified civil obedience, both in his writings and in his personal example. In the very last two paragraphs of his *Institutes* he leaves the door ajar on civil dis-

obedience and resistance. In time his followers, after much heart-searching, would in grim exasperation at Philip II, the Guises, Mary Queen of Scots, the Stuarts, and George III, push through this opening and as Calvinists give physical battle to tyranny. This continuing inclination on the part of the Reformed groups would make them increasingly angular to ecclesiastical and political conformity.

Calvin begins paragraph Thirty-one of Book IV, Chapter XX, with a caution to the people to leave it to God to overturn "tyrannical governments" (though he does throw in a "Let princes hear and fear" regarding the likelihood of divine retribution).

But, in the meanwhile, it behoves us to use the greatest caution, that we do not despise or violate that authority of magistrates, which is entitled to the greatest veneration, which God has established by the most solemn commands, even though it reside in those who are most unworthy of it, and who, as far as in them lies, pollute it by their iniquity. For though the correction of tyrannical domination is the vengeance of God, we are not, therefore, to conclude that it is committed to us, who have received no other command than to obey and suffer.

The most self-seeking monarch could be devoted to Calvin if he were to stop here. But he goes on with a quiet sentence that hints of a significant addition:

This observation I always apply to private persons.

Protectors of the People's Liberty

With Luther, Calvin feared the wild excesses and fierce cruelties of a "peasants' rebellion." And small wonder, for the lower classes in re-

bellion, never having had the chance to develop the disciplines of self-government, could hardly be expected to become more than vicious mobs wildly venting their angry frustrations in a destructiveness that could only end in stronger tyranny. But Calvin, aware of a growing self-consciousness on the part of lesser magistrates as "representatives of the people" (in a most limited sense, according to modern standards), *did* believe that there could be a lawful means of rebellion against a tyranny that had become unbearable. Thus we get his next sentences, his famous "Ephori" passage, found in the first as well as the last editions of the *Institutes*.

For if there be, in the present day, any magistrates appointed for the protection of the people and the moderation of the power of kings, such as were, in ancient times, the Ephori, who were a check upon the kings among the Lacedæmonians, or the popular tribunes upon the consuls among the Romans, or the Demarchi upon the senate among the Athenians; *or with power such as perhaps is now possessed by the three estates in every kingdom when they are assembled*; I am so far from prohibiting them, in the discharge of their duty, to oppose the violence or cruelty of kings, that I affirm, that if they connive at kings in their oppression of their people, such forbearance involves the most nefarious perfidy, because they fraudulently betray the liberty of the people, of which they know that they have been appointed protectors by the ordination of God. (IV. xx. 31.)

"Not . . . the Least Attention!"

In his last paragraph, Thirty-two, Calvin makes his second exception to civil obedience, this time for all citizens.

But in the obedience which we have shown to be due to the authority of governors, it is always necessary to make one exception, and that is entitled to our first attention—that it do not seduce us from obedience to him, to whose will the desires of all kings ought to be subject, to whose decrees all their commands ought to yield, to whose majesty all their sceptres ought to submit. . . . *If they command any thing against him, it ought not to have the least attention.*

One can readily see that no exclusive alliance between church and state could long endure where the citizenry were bred on exceptions like these! The church would either have to gloss over the very kind of political and social lawlessness which Calvinists were disinclined to overlook; or become virtual dictator to the state, which the state could not tolerate; or move toward some form of mutually respectful church-state separation. Calvinism's fierce love of its ecclesiastical independence forced the Reformed groups ultimately toward this last alternative, against which Calvin himself in his day might have grumbled, but which his teachings made inevitable.

II

Some Social Implications of Calvinist Doctrines

IT WOULD BE appropriate at this point to examine the classical Calvinist doctrines, which, as men lived with them from week to week, inspired resistance to tyranny and created a predisposition to democracy.

"Fountain of God's Free Mercy"

First, there is the famous postulate of *predestination*, "by which he [God] has determined in himself, what he would have to become of every individual of mankind," according to Calvin (III. xxi. 5). Because Calvin made it clear that by predestination he understood the Bible to teach that "God adopts some to the hope of life, and adjudges others to eternal death" (III. xxi. 5), we moderns understandably recoil in revulsion. Yet we miss the fact that Calvin regarded predestination as growing out of God's graciousness:

We shall never be clearly convinced as we ought to be, that our salvation flows from the fountain of God's free mercy, till we are acquainted with his eternal election, which illustrates the grace of God. (III. xxi. 1.)

Calvin made neither morbid nor arch use of the negative aspect of predestination. He regarded predestination as a Biblical teaching past our understanding, the discussion of which "is made very perplexed, and therefore dangerous, by human curiosity" (*ibid.*). Far from foisting upon the world a doctrine that would enable a new religious aristocracy to lord it over the spiritual rejects, Calvin turned to a Pauline idea as a means of shattering an old religious aristocracy, of breaking the grip in which the Roman Church had held the population. And he turned to this doctrine as a result of his new understanding of the mercy of God. God himself graciously initiates a man's salvation.

"Our Perpetual Security"

One does not have to hold strictly to the Calvinist doctrine of predestination (few can) in order to appreciate its religious and social implications. Professional ecclesiastics no longer were to be regarded as custodians of salvation, able to terrify the ordinary man with their assumed powers of inclusion and ex-

clusion. God "elected" whom he would, and no man could arrogate the power of such selection to himself, no matter what his ecclesiastical status. A saint's redemption could not be impugned!

What did Christ intend we should learn from this, but confidence in our perpetual security, since we have once been introduced into the number of his people? (III. xxiv. 6.)



Here was a security that no human being could dispense or withhold.

In Calvin's time the Roman Church, reminiscent of the orthodox Judaism of Paul's time, put the insecure masses through prescribed posturings and obeisances, ever threatening with damnation, or, at the least, uncertainties of salvation which only the church could dispel, unless they submitted. Calvin smashed this monopoly on salvation by an extreme predestinarianism. No church, no cleric, could claim any part whatsoever in a man's being chosen for redemption. It was all God's doing!

The Calvinist, thus assured by heaven itself of his salvation, had a

remarkable sense of poise amid what appeared to him to be a craven and insecure humanity who had to keep up their tribute to Rome in order to gain the promise of heaven. No one had less need of priest, bishop, cardinal, or pope than a Calvinist. (This is not to say that the Calvinists were such ecclesiastical individualists as to dispense with spiritual leaders. The place of the pastor amongst them was an especially high one. But when it came to a man's standing with heaven, it was fundamentally a matter between the individual and his God.)

Feats "Almost Supernatural"

Being sure of his election, the Calvinist was also sure of himself as an agent of the divine purpose, and he made a formidable opponent. The Dutch historian, John Lothrop Motley, in tracing the beginnings of the Western democracies, speaks of the "consciousness" of Calvinists in England, Holland, and America, "of being chosen soldiers of Christ" and the fact that their spiritual discipline enabled them "to accomplish things almost supernatural" against terrible odds.

Second, if the concept of predestination made warriors of the cross out of Calvinists, the doctrine of *election* made *revolutionary* warriors of them, as Motley points out in his writings.

"The Whole Human Race Equal"

Election, in the language of the *Institutes*, is God's act of giving "to some what he refuses to others." One would think that the teaching of predestination and election would have created a neurosis among the

people, causing them to fear that God might have passed them over, that perhaps they were damned. It seems, rather, to have been assumed that, if a man thought he was elected, he no doubt *was* elected. Calvinists were "set free (rather) than condemned" by the doctrine of election, writes one scholar. Now this assurance of being elected had implications of revolution. A commoner of the most ordinary origin stood on the same plane as a king of the most royal blood. God loved the commoner just as much. God had gone to the same ends on the cross for the salvation of the commoner as for the salvation of the king. And (here was the Calvinistic twist) there was always the possibility that, whereas the commoner was of the elect, the king was *not*.

Thus the doctrine of election became a great leveler of men. There was a new alignment of mankind: there were just two fundamental groups in society, the saved and the damned, and class had nothing to do with the matter. In his *Commentary on Romans*, Calvin writes:

God made the whole human race equal and placed them under one condition. . . . It is a law of nature that all men are formed in the image of God and are to be brought up in the hope of blessed eternity.

This was an equalitarianism that lifted the common man to an uncommon place in human society. It shattered old ecclesiastical and social caste systems. When the man in the pew, for example, discovered himself on a par in the church with cardinals and popes, there was no more ecclesiastical infallibility, and representative church government became a necessity.

"The Poorest He . . . in England"

In the political world the effects of election were even more startling. A seventeenth-century English Leveller, Rainsborough, put the equality implied in Calvinist teachings most graphically when he said:

For really I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the greatest he; and therefore truly, sir, I think it is clear that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government.

It took a long time for the main body of Calvinists to accept all the implications collected into that statement, but the implications had come out of basic Calvinism.

A French Calvinist writer said, "Kings are of the same dough as others . . . raised by the people." Calvinist preachers on occasion were not averse to reminding kings that they were of the same dough. Thus, preaching in 1596 before James VI of Scotland, who was to become James I of England seven years later, Andrew Melville said:

There are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland; there is King James, the head of the Commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject King James VI is, and of whose Kingdom he is not a king nor a lord nor a head; but a member.

Ultimately this equalitarianism stemming from the doctrine of election produced a new kind of society on which new nations could be built.

Third, in his treatment of divine providence, Calvin developed a doctrine of the *sovereignty of God* which was to make an important contribution to Calvinist thought and motiva-

tion in the social revolutions where the Reformed groups were particularly active. Calvin's idea of the sovereignty of God was fundamental to election and predestination as he saw them.

First, then, let the readers know that what is called providence describes God, not as idly beholding from heaven the transactions which happen in the world, but as holding the helm of the universe, and regulating all events. (I. xvi. 4.)

"A Power Constantly Exerted"

Calvin makes it abundantly clear that, by omnipotence, he is referring not only to the transcendent power of God but also to the imminent power. In the *Institutes* he describes God's omnipotence as

vigilant, efficacious, operative, and engaged in continual action; not a mere general principle of confused motion, as if he should command a river to flow through the channels once made for it, but a power constantly exerted on every distinct and particular movement. For he is accounted omnipotent, not because he is able to act, yet sits down in idleness, or continues by a general instinct the order of nature originally appointed by him; but because he governs heaven and earth by his providence, and regulates all things in such a manner that nothing happens but according to his counsel. (I. xvi. 3.)

"He governs heaven and earth . . . and regulates all things." For Calvin and his descendants this was both a steadying conviction and a glorious summons. By it every discouragement of life was measured down and every commonplace endeavor was graded up. The elect met life with a pious verve, for life's highest joy was that of obeying the imminently sovereign God whose regulative interest in the smallest details of man's existence lent significance to the

humblest saint's dedicated deeds. This kind of absorption with obeying the will of God could become a sterile regimentation that squeezed all the adventure out of life—a condition so well advertised by Puritanism's critics—but to discover only this is to learn, not the secret of the Calvinist faith, but rather its deterioration. Injected with a theologically refined conviction in the invincibility of the divine cause he served, the Calvinist regarded life's highest business to be that of doing the will of a Sovereign whose will one would not *dare* to ignore, and, if one had experienced the mercy of that Sovereign, would not *want* to ignore.

Man of Poise and Power

It is significant that this concept of sovereignty coupled with predestination did not result in a kind of fatalism, but rather in an aggressive plunging into the battle of life by a people made notably secure by the providence of God and by the partnership into which God had welcomed them. Calvinists thus were men of poise and moral power. They knew where they stood with God and as a result were not overly concerned with where they stood with men.

It is in a discussion of the sovereignty of God that we should set the Calvinist's famous sense of guilt. It was against a great God, not a petty divine snooper, that he felt he had sinned. The God of the Calvinist was a great God, and even minor lapses from his righteousness could not be regarded as trivial. And likewise the doing of this great God's will could never be less than an all-absorbing and exciting life endeavor!

Downgrading Monarchs

The more the Calvinist dwelt on the idea that God was "holding the helm of the universe," that he was the "perpetual governor" of all, the more he felt that only humility was becoming to man. Calvin had said:

Therefore, since God claims a power unknown to us of governing the world, let this be to us the law of sobriety and modesty, to acquiesce in his supreme dominion, to account his will the only rule of righteousness, and most righteous cause of all things. (I. xvii. 2.)

The Calvinist began with himself in this matter of humility, but quickly moved to apply it to other men, even to rulers. Calvin himself made this application in his famous "Dedication" of the French edition of the *Institutes*, addressed to King Francis I of France:

This consideration constitutes true royalty, to acknowledge yourself in the government of your kingdom to be the minister of God. For where the glory of God is not made the end of the government, it is not a legitimate sovereignty, but usurpation.

The downgrading of monarchs by Reformed churchmen, to become almost a hallmark of Calvinism, began with the limitations put upon man's pretensions of self-importance. Rulers were servants of God's purpose, not self-generating sources of unquestioned authority. They were warned that, though their calling as rulers was of God, nevertheless,

if they command any thing against him, it ought not to have the least attention; nor, in this case, ought we to pay any regard to all that dignity attached to magistrates; to which no injury is done when it is subjected to the unrivaled and supreme power of God (IV. xx. 32).

Here were embryonic ideas of equalitarianism, popular sovereignty, civil disobedience, resistance, and even of rebellion which would in time come to full growth under the pressure of tyranny. John Knox was to push the implications of Calvin's sovereignty of God to their logical conclusion when he would exclaim:

If their princes exceed their bound, and do against that wherefore they should be obeyed, they may be resisted even with power. My travail is that both princes and subjects should obey God.

In the Shadow of God's Sovereignty

This teaching would ultimately pull the rug out from under all absolutism. If God was sovereign, if his sovereign word was to be found in Scripture, then kings would soon find themselves in the pew, being taught God's law by their pastors. Thus it was that John Knox, consumed with the idea that God alone was absolute sovereign and that even a queen was to be included among the parish flock, dared lecture his monarch from the sovereign God's Holy Word. To Knox, every political ruler stood in the shadow of God's sovereignty, and any who tried to lengthen his own shadow unduly was an affront to God, a pretender to a power belonging only to heaven, and not to be obeyed. A man who gloried thus in the sovereignty of God was not apt to be overly impressed by the sovereignty of men, if there appeared to be disagreement between the two.

Another Calvinist, John Ponet, warned his monarch from Continental exile of his sentiment in this matter with the following verse:

To please or displease mens myndes, I
mynde not,
But mynde (as God knoweth) Goddes
mynde to fulfyl.
As he will, I will, and more I will not:
So God be pleased, say men what men
will.

A good summary of this doctrine of sovereignty as it relates to the mind of man is found in the first Preliminary Principle of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America: "God alone is Lord of the conscience."

Fourth, Calvin's *teachings concerning man* significantly influenced the development of modern democracy. First, there was a teaching of *equality*, not fully developed, in certain periods ignored, but definitely available for the time when Calvinists would awaken to the full implications of their system of thought. In his *Commentary on Romans*, as we have noted, Calvin wrote, "God made the whole human race equal and placed them under one condition." This concept would have to contend with an inclination toward aristocracy, but ultimately it would become a dominant note in Calvinism.

"Ensnared by the Inferior Appetites"

The better known teaching concerning man was the doctrine of *man's sinfulness*. According to

Calvin, man is not just slightly bad. He is a mess!

For man has not only been ensnared by the inferior appetites, but abominable impiety has seized the very citadel of his mind, and pride has penetrated into the inmost recesses of his heart. (II. i. 9.)

In another writing he says that "primal sin" is no minor affliction, "but completely embraces body and soul." Total depravity! Man presents nothing to the eyes of God but "repulsive filth." Now if you are going to have government with creatures like that running loose, you must build in strong safeguards against man himself. Calvinists were inclined to do just that. Lord Bryce is the author of the opinion that they succeeded in the American Constitution, wherein he finds expressed "a hearty Puritanism" regarding human nature.

From these main doctrines we find in Calvinism the following derivative ideas which become important factors in the development of democracy as they were dealt with from week to week by Calvinist preachers: *vocation*, the *rule of law*, *obedience* to constituted authority, the assumption (basic to Calvin's exhortations to obedience) *that God's will could be done in human society*, and finally, the concept of *progress through re-examination of premises* (the continuing search for and devotion to truth).

III

Calvinism and Responsible Citizenship

TO HAVE in proper perspective Calvinism's contribution to the American idea of freedom, one must understand the Reformed affinity for responsible citizenship.

"As Necessary . . . as Bread"

As was said earlier, Calvin taught not only that the will of God *can* be done in human society but also that it is an important recognition of God's sovereignty that his will *be* done in that area of life. We have pointed out that, in keeping with this attitude toward social organization, Calvin believed strongly in political government.

"It is equally as necessary to mankind as bread and water, light and air, and far more excellent." (IV. xx. 3.)

He did not believe in government merely as a concession to the evil nature of man, but as a good institution that could and should be an expression of honor to God's name.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Calvin enjoined his followers, in the discharge of their religious obligation, to honor their magistrates as heads of state,

to entertain the most honorable sentiments of their function, which they know to be a jurisdiction delegated to them from God, and on that account to esteem and reverence them as God's ministers and vicegerents (IV. xx. 22).

Or that he urged the elect to

approve their obedience to them, in submitting to their edicts, in paying taxes, in discharging public duties, and bearing burdens which relate to the common defense, and in fulfilling all their other commands (IV. xx. 23).

Calvin was himself a good example of a Christian who took civic responsibility seriously and his conduct became a significant pattern for his spiritual children to follow. His civic service and his shrewdness in practical politics were a foreshadowing of the great interest which the Puritans would take in the affairs of state. It would become axiomatic in Puritan nations that every citizen should exhibit an active interest in politics.

"Public-mindedness"

Calvin urged this care for the orderliness of the *total* social system upon his followers, until Calvinism

came to be regarded as a "life-system," as Kuyper called it. H. D. Foster has named this absorption with the realization of God's purpose in human society "public-mindedness" and has listed it as a primary characteristic of Calvinism.

Calvinism exhibited a keen interest in freedom, the keener the longer its history. But it was a responsible freedom. Freedom was demanded, not so much that men might enjoy freedom per se, but that they might fulfill their responsibilities to the sovereign God. This is a theologically based freedom, in distinction from the freedom ideas of secular liberals. It is a freedom that, in the long run, is less relative and less movable. This is a freedom that men can *insist* upon in order to get on to the most important business of life.

Social Solidarity

With such a deep sense of social responsibility embedded in Calvinist thought, it is not surprising to find a strong feeling of social solidarity and concern for the body politic among the New England settlers. Babette May Levy has made a study called *Preaching in the First Half Century of New England History*, and, among other things pertinent to our subject, she points out that the Calvinist preachers of New England applied themselves to the instruction of their people in social and political affairs, especially in matters pertaining to freedom and representative government. The New England preachers spoke much of freedom, but, as Alice Baldwin indicates in *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution*, it was a freedom "inextricably associated with

constitutional, ordered government." Civic responsibility was never lost sight of.

A people with such concepts of responsible citizenship would form an essential core of citizenry for a new nation in North America which would be gambling on government based on popular sovereignty.

Tools for Citizenship

Calvinism not only taught a responsible citizenship, but it also provided its adherents with some of the essential tools for that kind of citizenship. One such tool was a *self-discipline* growing out of the idea of the obedience already referred to. John Middleton Murry has said that the democratic society must have at its base the citizen who keeps the law not because he is ordered to do so, "but as the expression of his own better self." Calvinism is foremost among nonmonastic faiths in fostering such an obedience.

Calvinism provided its adherents with a *book*, the Bible, especially the Geneva Bible. Here was a handbook for citizenship which was put into the homes of the people for constant reference. Here was to be found the norm of social conduct which would be a unifying factor in developing a national consciousness. Here was a home library of covenant and contract theory; of admonitions to civil obedience; of personal and social ethics; and of the doctrine of conscience' inviolability.

"Took Pains to Develop Them"

Calvinists were careful to provide the tool of *education*. Not only did they fear an "illiterate Ministry," as the words on the Harvard Yard

gate remind us, but also an illiterate people. With the Bible and religious tracts available, the people were expected to read them for edification. John Cotton wrote, "Zeale is but a wilde-fire without knowledge." Perry Miller emphasizes the fact that there was a quest for truth in this zeal for knowledge which we might not associate with so creedal a faith. A Calvinist was to be pledged to truth even if

"it shall condemne our practices and persons also."

As a result of this devotion to the gaining of knowledge, Calvinists established schools. According to James Hastings Nichols, in *Democracy and the Churches*,

The Reformed did not merely believe in the capacities of all men; they took pains to develop them.

Morality and Freedom

A very important tool for responsible citizenship, which Calvinism gave its adherents, was a strong *sense of morality*, which has been both celebrated and lampooned in accounts of the Puritans. As one contemplates the free way of life as it is practiced in this country, with its system of promissory notes in business, tax declarations in government, and oaths in law, he can be thankful for the hard core of Puritan morality and its uncompromising struggle against expediency and self-interest. Daniel Webster, referring to the Puritan characteristic "of no compromise with moral evil," believed that the Calvinists were good insurance against political evils. Even in the midst of a rebellion which they themselves were helping

to foment, we find American Calvinists cautioning their adherents to conduct themselves in an ethical manner. Thus John Witherspoon, in his influential Princeton sermon on May 17, 1776, said,

He is the best friend to American liberty, who is most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion, and who sets himself with the greatest firmness to bear down profanity and immorality.

In the light of what has been said about the basic equalitarianism of the Calvinists, it goes without saying that these people demanded the same morality of their magistrates that they did of the common man. How fortunate for democracy that, at the time when such Machiavellian doctrines as, "Who knows not how to dissimulate, knows not how to reign," were infecting ruling circles, and when church princes were saying, "Better (to) have begot seven bastards than to have preached without surplice," Calvinism came along with its implacable stand on the supremacy of morality.

The Cross, Not a Featherbed

We have spoken in another connection of a very important tool for responsible citizenship in the free society: *industriousness*. This was not to be a society run for the people by their rulers, but a society in which the citizens had a continuing responsibility. Industry and enterprise would be required, and these virtues were bred into all Calvinists.

You must not thinke to goe to heaven on a featherbed; if you will be Christs disciples, you must take up his Crosse, and it will make you sweat,

wrote one Puritan. Governor Winthrop expressed the same sentiment when he said,

Whatsoever we stand in neede of is treasured in the earth by the Creator, and to be feched thense by the sweate of or Browes.

Finally Calvinism gave its adherents experience in *representative government* as a tool for responsible citizenship. Calvin felt that the rights of the people had been abridged in the Roman Church in that they had nothing to say in the selection of their pastors. It must be confessed that he was cautious in his restoration of a congregational voice in such matters.

"Libertie to Choose Their Owne Officers"

With whatever caution the election of pastors by their congregations began, such election soon was a primary characteristic of the Reformed churches, regardless of other variations in polity. This practice, coupled with the prominent place granted laymen in the Calvinist churches, inevitably made their congregations into schools of republicanism in which large segments of the population had experience in representative government. Trevelyan says that Mary Queen of Scots might well have been able to cope with the feudal aristocracy had it not been for the new segment of society brought into being under Knox in the Scottish Church. In England, forced to practice techniques of self-government surreptitiously, the Calvinists complained vigorously that their congregational rights were denied by the authoritarian Established Church. In New England the

practice of congregational elections was a cherished liberty. According to John Cotton,

That Christian libertie which the Lord Jesus by His blood hath purchased for His Church, and for all His children, giveth them all libertie to choose their owne Officers, and their owne fellow-members.

Where Calvinism developed along Presbyterian lines, the training in representative government was even more significant. One Presbyterian elder, A. Merwyn Davies, in a recent study of the relationship of Calvinism to freedom, has commented,

In a very real sense the presbyterian form of government . . . [has] become one of democracy's most important cradles.

With presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, made up of equal or nearly equal numbers of clergy and laity, governing area and national church bodies, voting on pastoral ordinations and assignments, and deciding on doctrine, the churchmen involved found it not at all difficult to move into the political bodies on corresponding levels. John Witherpoon provides a good example.

Speaking of this matter of Presbyterianism and representative government, Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, reminds us that

When the British Parliament was still full of representatives of rotten boroughs nominated by aristocracy, the Scottish General Assembly was already a truly national representative body. . . .

and that

The very first intercolonial governmental body of any kind on *this* continent was the Presbytery of Philadelphia founded in 1706 with representatives from Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey as well as from Pennsylvania.

IV

Calvinists and The American Revolution

THERE is not the space to detail the transmission of the Calvinist doctrines and practices outlined earlier to the colonial mind of this country through the work of Puritan and Presbyterian churchmen. It would be well, though, to hear a word on this matter from two noted scholars. Ralph Barton Perry, in his *Puritanism and Democracy*, writes,

It is safe to assume, then, that the influence of puritanism, in the broad Calvinistic sense, was a major force in the late colonial period, and that it contributed uniquely and profoundly to the making of the American mind when the American mind was in the making.

William Warren Sweet summarizes thus in his *Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840*,

Long before actual warfare began the New England clergy had, almost to a man, taken a definite stand on the issues which finally resulted in war.

Reluctance to Revolution

We move now to the way the Calvinists helped the colonies express that "American mind" in vigorous

political and military rebellion. Without discussing Calvinism's concept of responsible citizenship it would not have been fair to speak of the Calvinists and the American Revolution itself, for, without being reminded of their high respect for order and authority, one could very easily interpret their intense and aggressive activity in the rebellion as characteristic intoxication with revolution. This would be incorrect, as the previous section has sought to point out. There was a fundamental reluctance to revolution in Calvinism for which we can all be grateful.

Once the matter of national independence was settled, the Reformed group intensified their never abandoned counsels for support of and obedience to civil authority, now represented by the Continental Congress. It is this writer's opinion that these continuing and influential counsels helped make the American Revolution a move in the direction of more soundly lawful government rather than a bitter emotional explosion of wild hopes and wilder actions on behalf of illy defined liberty.

A Fear as Well as a Philosophy

Yet there was a long identification with and enthusiastic support of the Revolution on the part of the Calvinists that would almost belie the "fundamental reluctance to revolution" concept. Let us turn to the Calvinist participation in the American Revolution. As we do so it is only fair to say that self-protection was a part of the Calvinists' enthusiasm for independence. They feared the establishment of an Anglican episcopacy in the colonies, and what they supposed would be a loss of religious liberties for dissenters. In the light of a history of Congregational enforced conformity among the New England Puritans, this may appear somewhat ironical. Yet one must remember that all of the members of the Reformed family in the colonies had had bitter experiences of religious repression at the hands of the Church of England in the homeland, and they felt that they had ample justification for their fears.

The Calvinists, then, had a political philosophy *and* a sense of being threatened as a group, with which to justify and fortify rebellion, and they pressed their grievances vigorously. Indeed, the Presbyterians of this Protestant family were so prominent and so aggressive in the political, propaganda, and military aspects of the movement as to cause the loyalist adherents and agents to give them more credit (or discredit!) than they deserved.

There was the famous testimony of Joseph Galloway, of Philadelphia, before a committee of the House of Commons, giving the activity and influence of the Presbyterians as the

underlying cause of the Revolution. Galloway later revised Presbyterian perfidy downward by enumerating the enemies of the British government as "Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and smugglers." Ambrose Serle, former undersecretary of Dartmouth and part of the British authority in the colonies, sized up the rebellion thus:

Presbyterianism is really at the Bottom of this whole Conspiracy, has supplied it with Vigor, and will never rest, till something is decided upon it.

Whatever their proportionate share in the Revolution, the Presbyterians of the Reformed group were overwhelmingly supporters of it. The Loyalist Anglican of Trinity Church, New York, Rev. Charles Inglis, said of their pastors,

I do not know one Presbyterian minister, nor have I been able, after strict inquiry, to hear of any, who did not by preaching and every effort in his power promote all the measures of the colonial congress, however extravagant.

Wherever there were Presbyterians, there was strong sentiment for the patriot cause. In New York in 1768 Alexander Mackrabie sent a letter to Sir Philip Francis, saying:

The Presbyterians should not be allowed to grow too great. They are of Republican Principles.

"Rascally Presbyterian Clergy"

In the southern colonies the Presbyterian preachers were actively spreading their antimonarchical doctrines. A young English visitor, Nicholas Cresswell, traveled extensively in the southern and middle colonies between 1774 and 1777. Thomas C. Pears, Jr., in an article on "Presbyterians and American

Freedom" in the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* (June, 1951), cites pertinent observations from Cresswell's journal:

Alexandria, Va., Nov. 1st, 1774: Went to a Presbyterian meeting. These are a set of rebellious scoundrels, nothing but political discourse instead of Religious Lectures. Alexandria, Oct. 20, 1776: The Presbyterian Clergy are particularly active in supporting the measures of Congress from the Rostrum, gaining proselytes, persecuting the unbelievers, preaching up the righteousness of their cause and persuading the unthinking populace of the infallibility of their success. July 19, 1777: . . . the Rascally Presbyterian Clergy have all along been the chief instigators and supporters of this unnatural Rebellion.

There were not so many official actions taken by Presbyterian bodies endorsing the patriot cause as one might expect, in view of the above, but we find enough such actions to make it clear that unofficial Presbyterian participation was not out of step with the sentiment of the gathered presbyters.

New England Pastors

On the other hand, the Synod of New England left no doubt as to its official position. Two months after the Declaration of Independence, the synod resolved that

"Any suspected to be inimical to the liberties of the independent States of America" should be denied "a seat in this judicature."

John Morrison, who had gone over to the British, was deposed, and another member, John Houston, was suspended and not reinstated until he had given satisfactory evidence of his loyalty to the cause of independence.

The pastors' support of the Revo-

lution often became a very active matter. Alice Baldwin says,

On numerous occasions a fiery minister of the Gospel won more recruits and filled more empty regiments than could the men of war.

Just how important to the cause of independence pastors could become is illustrated by the case of Thomas Allen, of Pittsfield, a graduate of Harvard who went in 1765 to be pastor of a Massachusetts back-country parish. He became so dominant a figure for the patriot cause in that area

that his name was sent to General Gage as that of "the most dangerous character to the King's cause in the western part of the colony."

With New England preaching having to do with the problems of social and political life, and with the clergy vocal in their support of the patriot movement, it is not surprising that many sermons were published as patriotic pamphlets after the war started.

"One Less Tomorrow"

Regarding the Presbyterian segment of colonial Calvinism, we find that less than half a dozen of the leading Presbyterian laymen and ministers were loyalists in the pre-Revolution struggles. Eleven out of a total of fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were Presbyterians. (This does not count the Calvinistic Congregationalists of New England.) The College of New Jersey had the largest number of graduates as signers of the Declaration of Independence of all the colleges. Among the Presbyterian patriot preachers during the war itself,

George Duffield, of the Third Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, was one of the most famous. It was he who, finding too many able-bodied men in his congregation, rebuked them, saying that there "would be one less tomorrow," and returned to American troops whom he had already served.

Other notable patriotic Presbyterian preachers were John Miller, of Dover; Robert Davidson, of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia; Patrick Alison, of Baltimore; John Blair and James Waddell, of Virginia; and James Caldwell, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, nicknamed the "Rebel High Priest." (The British burned Caldwell's church and shot his wife, and later may have shot him.)

Other notable Presbyterians were: the Virginia patriot and advocate of religious toleration, Samuel Davies, who exercised special influence on Patrick Henry; James Wilson, Pennsylvania signer of the Declaration of Independence and member of the Constitutional Convention; Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, whom John Adams called "the life of the cause of liberty"; and the famous John Witherspoon.

"A Musket in His Pulpit"

The Presbyterian clergy went with their men as chaplains. We are told that seven out of twelve New Jersey chaplains were Presbyterians, for example. At least one Presbyterian parson in the war area kept himself prepared for more than speaking and writing:

John Harris, of South Carolina, who is said to have habitually preached with a

musket in his pulpit and a powder horn about his neck.

Because they were so much identified with the Revolution, Presbyterians were especially despised by the British forces, who desecrated and wantonly destroyed over fifty of their church buildings and defaced others.

There remains one aspect of the Revolution which must be mentioned. Andrew C. McLaughlin brings it out in his study of American constitutionalism. Decrying textbook overemphasis on the destructive aspects of the Revolution, he lays great stress upon the restraint of the colonists and their marked capacity for constructive political endeavor. Dr. Richard B. Morris, of the Columbia University history department, in his lectures on the American Revolution, attributes this latter fact primarily to the role of lawyers in the Revolution. This is certainly part of the answer. Yet one must remember that these legal men were leaders in a culture where Calvinism, as we have pointed out, had for generations been creating a belief in government by law, a strong social and religious doctrine of obedience to law, and an uncompromising concept of personal and social righteousness based on Scripture.

Calvinists were not fighting a rebellion merely to be free—they were fighting to be free to fulfill their responsibilities under God, and enough of them were conscious of this larger purpose to give a sense of moral direction to a new nation where self-interest and saintliness, even among "the elect," were understandably mixed together.

V

Freedom's Security Today

IN COMPARING the spiritual and political beginnings of the United States with basic contemporary American attitudes, one is shocked to see how our early society of vigorous dissent has become a nation almost pathologically absorbed with "security." This near obsession has both distorted our view of international relations and eroded our civil liberties.

Let us observe two incongruities in this regard, and then note a certain judgment upon the American church.

First, the United States is a middle-aged revolutionary who no longer understands revolution, who indeed fears revolution.

A Surprise and Sorrow

That there should be so much misunderstanding between the peoples of the United States and of the nations in revolution today is one of the surprises of history and a chief sorrow to men of good will. Especially to churchmen is this disturbing. Accustomed to generations of spiritual interchange through the missionary work of the various de-

nominations, American Christians have naïvely assumed that endearing relationships were growing up which would match the impulses of love prompting the world mission of the church.

Endearing relationships *have been* growing up, and reservoirs of friendship *have been* developing. Yet these endearing relationships have not been so universal as many supposed, and there have been reactions of distrust and suspicion sufficient to give peoples who should be natural friends cause for reappraising their relations.

Estranged by Revolution

Revolution has been going on in these lands. It is revolution, which we, of all the national groupings of the world, should have been prepared to understand. In part inspired by our example, great sections of the world are involved in the same exciting adventure. Yet we have settled so deeply into the balance-of-power kind of world order that we have rather missed the larger feeling of creativity in international relations.

On the whole we Americans emotionally desire freedom for all people, but we have forgotten that freedom requires various degrees of revolution, sometimes the highest degree.

Second, United States society is inclined today to distrust the very freedom of dissent out of which a durable civic loyalty is born.

Totalitarianism Threatens Freedom

To say this is not to minimize the totalitarian threat to our liberties, from abroad and from within, as epitomized in this moment by international communism, and in the moment before by fascism. We who love a freedom based upon respect for the individual and upon individual responsibility for social welfare face clever, ruthless, and determined foes, and it would be a tragic disservice to freedom to be careless of the fact. Communist ideology, for example, has a thoroughly antireligious philosophy from which to sketch out, undertake, and excuse the undisputed liquidation of "counterrevolutionaries" and "enemies of the people." It is a philosophy for doing to individual human beings exactly what our fathers labored to prohibit by their revolutionary and constitutional endeavors.

Staying with Freedom's Ways

Essentially, ours is a struggle between social philosophies, and we strike at the roots of marauding as well as subversive totalitarianism in the long run when we stay with and reinforce our philosophy of human rights and civil liberties. Yet, in our frenetic deification of "security" we have demonstrated more confidence

in totalitarianism's techniques of mass conformity than in our own free ways of responsible discussion and dissent. In recent years we have seen dedicated American citizens told that their daring to enter into multisided discussions of public policy where some newly declared sacrosanct doctrine was disputed and their association with unapproved persons smacked of treason. American people, perhaps especially American church people, with vigorous minor exceptions, only slowly and tentatively objected to such treatment of citizens.

The People Are Not to Be Trusted!

Meanwhile, an influential Congressman seriously proposed that all citizens voting in national elections be required to affirm their loyalty and deny any disloyalty by taking an oath! And now we are requiring loyalty oaths of teen-agers seeking student loans under the National Defense Education Act of 1958.

Fundamentally the issue is not settled yet, and at any moment, under the machinations of some clever political opportunist, we could return to the public dragnet method of securing ourselves from the subversives.

Former Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, certainly no fire-eating liberal, became alarmed at the damage being done to our diplomatic service by the swirl of subversive charges made against State Department officials and wrote an article for *Colliers* magazine, Nov. 11, 1955, entitled "Stop Shooting Our Sentries!" We need to do more than that. We must stop torpedoing our philosophy. We have moved more

rapidly than we know toward making a god of the state in the interest of saving democracy—yet it is exactly democracy which this kind of god destroys with relish, once it gains the undisputed sway which some of its legislative priests have demanded for it. And it destroys democracy through the will of the majority once it persuades that majority that there really should be no minority—at least no disturbing, dissenting minority.

The Church Is Not to Be Trusted!

Ironically, in their panicky suspicion of American citizens, and perhaps fearing that some might dispute their interpretation of patriotism, certain apostles of legislated loyalty have insisted that one of the most effective training schools of loyalty to free government, the American church, swear that it is not disloyal! Therefore California began demanding that churches attest to the following before being granted their annual tax exemption:

This organization does not advocate the overthrow of the government of the United States or of the State of California by force or violence or other unlawful means nor advocate the support of a foreign government against the United States in event of hostilities.

This is pupils—and pupils who have done poorly in their history lessons—exactng loyalty oaths of their teachers. Here is consummate effrontery on the part of arrogant politicians who have persuaded a whole people to appoint them custodians of the weights and measures of loyalty and who now figuratively tramp into the sanctuaries in baseless suspicion and say, “Stand up

to have your loyalty measured!”

“We Have Helped Create It”

Is our security so precarious as this, that even the churches endanger the welfare of the nation unless they legally and annually commit themselves to the government they went to such pains to help create free? The Presbytery of Los Angeles exclaimed in protest:

We are startled by the request that we sign to the effect that we are loyal to the government of the United States. But if any body of people is prepared to affirm such a loyalty, we Presbyterians certainly are, for it is the habit of our lives daily to do so by thought, word, and deed.

The report goes on to make clear their “loyal rebel” position, even in signing an oath.

We are a loyal people—fiercely loyal to the United States Government—but we are loyal, not first of all because we were born here, but rather because this is a “nation *under* God. . . .” Our loyalty, then, is above all to God, and there are *some* things which an evil state, even if it should be our own, cannot command us to do.

The report returns to the incongruity of such an oath:

When this oath is demanded of us, we are inclined to feel the startled hurt of a loyal and faithful wife of many years whose husband has been reading a series of articles on the unfaithfulness of wives and suddenly presents his wife with a paper to sign affirming her faithfulness!

Contrasting Concepts of Loyalty

We have come to a contrast in philosophies of loyalty: the churches have assumed that it was a gift which a man trained in the art of free citizenship spontaneously offered to his country, but the new experts have insisted that it could be

demanding on pain of penalty; the churches have taught it as the religious response of a people who see orderly government as an expression of God's purpose, but the new experts have insisted that it be a legally defined and sworn response as part of a nationalistic cultus; the churches have insisted that that government is strongest whose people regard God as the only Lord of the inner man, but the new experts have regarded such reserve of allegiance as too much maneuvering room for potential treason.

After tracing something of the growth of American democracy, surely we must see by now the contrast between legislated loyalty and the loyalty to a free and democratic nation bred by a freely dissenting people of spiritual orientation. Shall we turn for the security of the nation, then, to the experts in gossip, suspicion, conformity, censorship, test oaths, and clearance, or shall we be our own security against totalitarianism by being experts in the sources and ways of freedom?

The 165th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., May, 1953, has called upon us to be our own security, and has said:

To the maintenance of freedom the church must ever be alert. We believe that free ministers, in free pulpits, preaching to free people the liberating truth of Christ, are the chief bulwark of freedom and the best guarantee of its preservation.

Valid Judgment

In one way, the apostles of legislated loyalty represent a valid judgment on the church (though hardly as intended by that group). Some excellent work on behalf of brother-

hood is being done in the churches. Yet there is no incensed uprising from American congregations over the issue of racial discrimination. Even many of those who deplore the matter assume that such specialists as the Quakers and the American Civil Liberties Union will do what can be done in these situations.

This is tragic. No wonder the church can be called up to exhibit its credentials of loyalty without arousing a general protest. It shows too few marks of the battle.

The Begriming Arena of Liberty

Colonial Presbyterians were involved in the revolution that *was* early America, and participated in the civil rights struggle that gave birth to an orderly democratic government. Their spiritual heirs cannot doff the armor of rebellion for the bleached fabric of conformity, nor abdicate the controversy over human freedom for the comfort of being acceptable. That is, they cannot do so and remain Presbyterians. Of course they cannot in good conscience claim credit for all that is free and democratic about American life, but they will be in worse conscience if they abandon the harrowing, begriming arena of their fathers where civil liberties are still to be wrested from stubborn tyrannies, and become a chaplains' corps to an intolerable *status quo*. Nonetheless, these modern descendants of Calvin cast doubt upon the legitimacy of their birth by all too many movements in the direction of just such a priesthood. And in their temptation we see the temptation of this nation.



PROGRAM POINTERS

THERE'S program for local churches in Calvinist theology and polity. It will take some digging, but the rewards should more than justify the effort. Theology is not academic exercise for seminary scholars. Every church member is called to be a theologian if he expects to understand and talk about what he believes, and see how faith and daily life come together. There is a special urgency about providing instruction for church officers and new United Presbyterians.

Church Officer Training

Church-wide attention is being given to the nurture of an informed, responsible laity, and this issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS* is relevant to each cycle of the training recommended by the General Assembly on the Nature, the Order, and the Nurture of the church.

As the churches move into the third year of the cycle of training on "The Nurture of the Church" (1959) and deal with the responsibility of church officers for the Christian nurture of the congregation, careful reading of this issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS* with its emphasis on Christian freedom is much in order. Indeed, the discussion of our Calvinist heritage could serve as a good review of the two preceding studies on "Nature" and "Order."

We hope that every minister will order copies of this issue for each church officer and use this issue to round out and enliven the current discussion of the Church Officer Training materials.

We suspect that many ruling elders and deacons have not read Calvin's *Institutes*, even in abridged form. We hold that Presbyterians cannot fully appreciate what our church is and what its central purpose may be without some appreciation of our Calvinist roots and the profound wisdom of Calvin's Reformation theology. Because the *Institutes* are apt to be hard going even for seminarians, we hope that the excerpts make Calvin less formidable, and serve to introduce his basic ideas of freedom and orderly representative government of church and state. In each of the *Pastor's Discussion Guides* for the three years there are concepts and questions which could well bear further illumination from Calvin's teaching.

Chapters I and II of this issue are particularly pertinent to the discussion of "The Nature of the Church." They are fundamental to the discussion of the church as a fellowship of believers, or the beloved community.

Concepts of nurture can be pretty vague even with the "Questions to Aid Discussion" in the *Pastor's Discussion Guide*. There is a good deal of lamentable easy moralism in the

churches, and equally vague thinking about the meaning of Christian discipleship. How many church officers have a clear idea of what their particular church is trying to do? What is its basic goal and purpose? Ministers and clerks of session may be hard put to explain to outsiders just what the particular congregation is trying to accomplish in the world in terms that John Q. Public understands.

On page 25 of the *Pastor's Discussion Guide* on "The Nurture of the Church," the firing of a woman doctor in a Florida town because she had a conference with a Negro nurse in a public restaurant would be a good specific to discuss in terms of the church's responsibility to the civil community and its own encounter with the forces of evil in the world.

As solid preparation for the third-year cycle every minister and every ruling elder might read, along with this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS, *The Protestant and Politics*, by William Lee Miller, from the Layman's Theological Library and recommended in the Church Officer Training book list.

In using Discussion 5 on "The Church's Corporate Action," in the third cycle, we dare suggest that Calvin has realistic and definitive advice for the church's strategy and corporate action. C.O.T. materials lift up the love ethic, but Calvin links love with justice and freedom.

We have many kinds of strategy in mind, particularly the role of the church in the city, in community planning and development, and in racial desegregation. As Calvin wisely points out, the destinies of

both the civil community and the Christian community are interlocked, and woe betide the Christian community that neglects its responsibility to the state!

For New Members

New members and communicants classes need to understand what kind of church ours is, and what responsibilities they are getting into when they join a church related to our Presbyterian system. Chapter II of this issue makes especially clear Calvin's doctrine of God's sovereignty and the other Reformation doctrines that stem from it—predestination, election, and the doctrine of man's sinfulness. Calvin would seem to be a good corrective for the casual church member who believes that it really doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe something.

For New Voters

Another form of Christian nurture is the preparation of young people and new Americans to exercise their freedom to vote. This preparation deeply probes the affinity between responsible citizenship and obedient response to what God is doing in the world. Calvin's strong belief in political government was a recognition that God is sovereign in human society and that God has instituted both the church and state to exalt his name. The Calvinist preachers of New England furnish some good examples of how the church nurtured its members in social and political affairs. Discussions of the theological roots of our free, democratic so-

ciety and representative government give church members a new concept of their political responsibilities at election time, as well as their year-round participation in policy decisions.

It is important for new members of our churches to realize that participation in our Presbyterian form of government paved the way for later participation in a free, representative form of civil government. The history recorded in the chapter on "Calvinists and the American Revolution" could be dramatized in congregational meetings, also in presbyteries and synods. Episodes from these revolutionary times could well be presented in tableaux or dramatic sketches with interpreting comments taken from the magazine. Open meetings of presbytery where laymen and church women attend could feature such presentations.

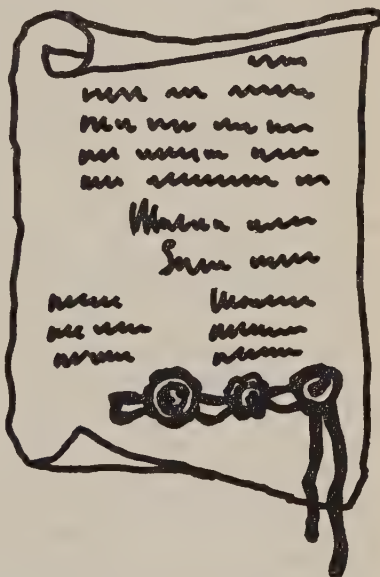
Getting Ready for General Assembly

Most presbyteries will have elected their commissioners to the 171st General Assembly when this issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS* reaches the churches. Presbyteries have various procedures for calling their commissioners together—not for instruction but for review of General Assembly rules and material in the "*Blue Book*," and preparation for intelligent and responsible participation in our church's highest judicatory.

The sessions of local churches have their special responsibility for General Assembly also, particularly if their members are chosen as commissioners.

Here we offer the resources of

the Department of Social Education and Action. "United Presbyterians Speak," a compilation of General Assembly pronouncements of the former Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the former United Presbyterian Church of North America (*SOCIAL PROGRESS*, July, 1958), explains the process by which the social



pronouncements are made, and how they may guide the churches in influencing and supporting responsible public policy. This compendium of social deliverances could be reviewed, with particular reference to those sections dealing with international affairs, racial and cultural relations, human rights and civil liberties. Such questions as these might provoke response: On what grounds does the General Assembly speak? What areas of public concern are omitted in the pronouncements? To what extent are General Assembly pronouncements to be regarded as

the official positions of The United Presbyterian Church U.S.A.? How do General Assembly pronouncements help in the strategy of local churches? What are standards by which Christians as citizens view public affairs and engage in political action? How do you answer the critics who say that the church should stay out of politics? (See *The Protestant and Politics* for some good answers!) General Assembly commissioners would do well to note Dr. Miller's arguments and to arrive at some of their own.

Let Freedom Ring!

The freedom that was so precious to Calvin is developed in a particularly persuasive historical film based on the book, *Almanac of Freedom*, by Justice William O. Douglas. *Date with Liberty* is a powerful and impressive film illustrating five concepts of liberty: freedom of the press, right to a fair trial, right to confront witnesses, the power of veto, and the privilege of the vote. Each form of liberty is rooted in human experience and safeguarded by law. Each is developed as a dramatic incident and provides excellent background for discussion. Justice Douglas has brought together a remarkable collection of quotations and historical incidents involving

people who fought for freedom—one for each day of the year. On June 25, for example, the *Almanac* quotes portions of "A Letter to Presbyterians."

A full evening's program could be developed around the film and the book. A short review of the book and/or readings from the *Almanac* might introduce the film. Time could be given to the discussion of each of the incidents. The concluding summary could bring in references to our Calvinist heritage and how Presbyterians through the years have had a significant role in the long struggle for freedom.

It might be provocative for each group to consider in the course of the evening these questions: What is our church doing to encourage discussion of controversial issues on which there is general disagreement? What could our church have done to uphold the essential freedom dealt with in each of the episodes of the movie? Are there equally good examples of liberty of conscience in persons whom we know in community, state, or national life?

This program might take the form of a birthday celebration. Persons whose birthdays are being observed could be guests of honor, and birthday readings from the *Almanac* would be a most unusual way of paying a tribute to them.

Worship Resources

Prayers of Concern

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage, we humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. . . . Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogancy and from every evil way. Defend our liberties and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth.

In the time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness and in the day of trouble suffer not our trust in thee to fail. Amen.—From *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Grant, Almighty God, since we are the work and fashioning of thy hands, that we may know that we exist and move in thee alone. We submit ourselves to thee; not only to be ruled by thy hidden providence, but to be obedient and submissive to thee, as becometh sons. Thus we desire to glorify thy name in the world, through Christ our Lord. Amen.—Calvin, from *Prayers of the Reformers*, compiled by Clyde Manschreck. Muhlenberg Press. Used by permission.

Increase our faith, O merciful Father, that we may not turn from thy heavenly Word. Increase in us hope and love, with a careful keeping of all thy commandments, that no hardness of heart, no hypocrisy, no concupiscence, nor enticements of the world may draw us away from thy obedience. And, seeing that we live now in these most perilous times, let thy fatherly providence defend us against the violence of our enemies, which do everywhere pursue us. Inasmuch as by thy holy Apostle we are taught to make our prayers and supplications for all men, we pray not only for ourselves, but beseech thee also to restore all who are still in the miserable captivity of blindness and error to the pure understanding and knowledge of thy heavenly truth: that we all with one consent and unity of minds may worship thee our only God and Savior.—Knox, from *Prayers of the Reformers*. Used by permission.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



In the Churches

Members of churches of the Presbytery of Mattoon should know how to act more responsibly in situations related to public schools if plans made by the SEA committee are carried out.

Churches are being challenged to provide opportunity for their members to study and take appropriate action in the area of the church and the public school.

A mimeographed pamphlet entitled "How is your church serving your community?" has been prepared and distributed. The pamphlet describes the program in detail and calls upon the churches of the presbytery to consider three goals: (1) to increase our knowledge of public schools and free education; (2) to see how the Christian church is related to public education, both locally and historically; and (3) to strengthen our public schools by specific action, according to the needs of the local system.

Five projects are suggested for each of the first two goals. Ten projects are suggested for the third. It is a desire of presbytery that each congregation attempt one project toward each goal. Thus three definite efforts, whether large or small, will have been made to learn about and act upon the school problems of the community. Excellent resources are given for each goal.

Rev. Edgar W. Mills, Palestine, Illinois, chairman of the presbytery SEA committee, in speaking to the

churches concerning this project said in part, "If you can make even a small beginning toward increasing your knowledge of public schools, relating your faith to public education, and strengthening your local schools, you will find heart for rejoicing in the Lord."

The status of integration in the churches of the Presbytery of Chicago has been graphically reported to the presbytery by its Department of Social Education and Action. The churches of the presbytery are assigned symbols descriptive of the present evaluation of their inclusiveness. These symbols are superimposed on the latest available map of Chicago. The map shows the residence of the Negro population. In this way individual churches can determine their own position in regard to integration as it relates to changing population.

A similar study and report on suburban areas will be made.

The Senior High Youth Fellowship of the Mayfair United Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is exploring the role of the church in world affairs. Members of the group are participating in a year-long emphasis on international affairs. The program provides for a variety of study and discussion sessions and four projects, which include: (1) participation in the UNICEF "Trick or Treat" program

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at Halloween time; (2) a trip to the United Nations; (3) a festival of films; and (4) entertaining young people from other countries who are living and studying in the Philadelphia Metropolitan area.

Led by the pastor, Rev. Warren Corbett, the group recently visited the United Nations. Prior to the visitation, the group studied the nature and work of the United Nations. Another related meeting used a Kit topic on "Life Without Bombs—A Dream?"

A tour of the United Nations was directed by a fellow young person Miss Okeke, of Nigeria. The group attended a meeting of the Trusteeship Council's Committee on Petitions. There was a briefing by the United Nations staff and a specific briefing by Dr. Edwardo Mondlane, a native of East Africa. Dr. Mondlane spoke of African problems and of the dreams of his people.

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Vance are the regular sponsors of the youth group. Arrangements for the visit to the United Nations were made in cooperation with the Department of Social Education and Action. This service is available to all groups.

How can General Assembly pronouncements find their way into the life and work of the local church? The Presbytery of Indianapolis has developed one approach. Recognizing the importance of pronouncements, the Presbytery of Indianapolis encouraged their pastors to deal with specific pronouncements, based on appropriate text, by launching a social education and action sermon contest.

Awards were offered for first and second best sermons preached by the contestants from the pulpits of the churches in which the ministers presided. Entries were judged on the basis of appropriateness of text, pertinence of theme, and composition.

First prize went to Rev. Kent Buser, pastor, Presbyterian Church, Acton, Indiana. Rev. Roe H. Johnston, pastor, First Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, won the second prize.

"A Churchman's Responsibility in Legislative Matters" was the theme of a one-day workshop sponsored by the Social Education and Action Committee of the Presbytery of Boise. Held at the capital in Boise, Idaho, churchmen observed legislative process, listened to their legislators, and discussed important issues.

Participants heard presentations on A Preview of Taxation Bills, How a Bill Becomes a Law, The Twin Crisis of Education and Taxation, Lobbyists and Pressure Groups, and The Churchman as a Responsible Citizen. They enjoyed a fellowship dinner, had a guided tour of the Senate and the House, engaged in conferences with legislators, and discussed the role of the church in the democratic process.

The SEA committee in one local church has a regular column in each issue of the weekly "Church and Home" publication, which goes into the homes of all the members.

Error—March, 1959, page 37, name Terrow misspelled; should have been Rev. Max V. Perrow.

In Washington



As the annual ten-day Easter recess got under way in the first session of the 86th Congress, a look at the first eighty days provides a rather impressive list of accomplishments, judged by past Congressional standards.

Measures on which action has been completed include: approval of statehood for Hawaii, extension of the peacetime draft for four years, modification of the Senate rule of unlimited debate, and approval of a three-month "tapering off" extension of Federal funds for supplementary unemployment benefits. In addition, bills have been passed in conflicting form by each House, which have to be ironed out later, and Congressional committees have done impressive work, which will be subject to floor action when Congress returns.

A housing bill, assistance to depressed areas, airport construction aid, and an increase in the U.S. contribution to the International Monetary Fund are some of the major items that have been acted upon by one or the other House and await completion when Congress convenes again. According to Speaker Rayburn, the house is further ahead on appropriation bills than it has ever been so early in the session, and he boasted of "a lot of savings" in Administration proposals.

The so-called "battle of the budget" rages unabated. The White House is bearing down on the economy angle and the "Democratic" Congress is chafing under the label of "spenders." Senate Finance Committee Chairman Byrd (D., Va.) says this session clearly "shows a trend

toward enactment of spending legislation far in excess of Administration requests." He pointed out that the Senate has voted to increase Presidential proposals by 24 per cent and the House has voted increases averaging 12 per cent. Speaker Rayburn says: "If we cut a dollar below what they want, they act like the heavens were going to fall in and if we provide one dollar more for some program they call us 'reckless spenders.'" The real showdown on spending is yet to come and the efficacy of the Presidential veto as an economy weapon remains to be seen. Late in March a Senate-House Committee studying taxation indicated that the Administration's battle for a balanced budget in fiscal 1960 was already lost, since expected tax revenue would be considerably under the President's estimate.

The most significant development of the session, so far, is the continued firm influence of Senate Majority Leader Johnson and Speaker Rayburn, in their respective Houses. Liberals have not shown the power some analysts of last November's election results had predicted they would have. Extremists of both the right and the left are more or less isolated. The growing political influence of the western section of the country is evident and is a factor in this situation. Whether the leaders will be able to maintain their present tight control in the future days of the session remains undetermined, at this writing, but indications are that they will continue to hold in effective check the heavy Democratic majorities in both Houses.

About Books

Religion and American Democracy, by Roy F. Nichols. Louisiana State University Press, 1959. 108 pp. with bibliography and notes. \$2.50.

This is a thoughtful, richly documented, and convincing treatment of one aspect of the interaction of religion and culture in America.

The author is a distinguished American historian, who since 1925 has been associated with the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, where he now serves as Vice-Provost and Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. In 1949 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in history after the publication of his *Disruption of the American Democracy*.

There has always been an intimate connection in the New World between religion and political affairs. The relationship, however, has never been one of simple harmony. Against a rich background of social and intellectual history, Dr. Nichols outlines the evolution of political and religious thought and beliefs in the United States to our own time. Diverse religious traditions, ranging from Luther and Calvin to Fox and from traditional orthodoxy to free thought, are shown to have exerted a persistent, though sometimes confusing, influence in our public life and in the development of our public-school system.

The book is very well written and will appeal to ministers and other

churchmen who are interested in church history and in the development of political life in America.

Education and Freedom, by H. G. Rickover (Vice-Admiral, U.S.N.). Foreword by Edward R. Murrow; preface by Charles Van Doren. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1959. 256 pp. with index. \$3.50.

This book, heralded as Admiral Rickover's authorized book on American education—our first line of defense—is a passionate and brilliant tract by a man who is deeply concerned about American freedom.

The direction and scope of the book are suggested by some of the chapter headings: Education Is Our First Line of Defense—Make It Strong, Pioneering on the Frontiers of Knowledge, Investment in Human Resources, and Mass Education and Merit.

Admiral Rickover's interest in education derives from his experience in the early days of the nuclear age when he was assigned to build the first nuclear power plant for naval use. He discovered that American education was not supplying the right kind and number of highly trained specialists. He has devoted every available power since that time to advocating an educational system in the United States amidst the challenge of the atomic era. The present book is based largely upon his many

speeches on the subject. Mr. Murrow says that this book "is in his opinion the most stimulating and searching analysis of the perils of inadequate preparation for the nuclear age that I have encountered."

It is important to note that Admiral Rickover pleads not only that we train better scientists and technicians, but also more responsible leaders in all walks of life. He has a high regard for the humanities. He wants intelligence and disciplined thinking to reach a new kind of respectability. Indeed, he would make this essential to American security.

This book is bound to elicit a great deal of discussion, even controversy, and that's all to the good. America needs to look at its educational system.

The Supreme Court from Taft to Warren, by Alpheus Thomas Mason. Louisiana State University Press, 1958. 250 pp. with index. \$4.95.

This timely and useful book reviews the record of the Supreme Court of the United States during a half century of turmoil and testing.

The author is McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University. He is regarded as one of our outstanding students of the Supreme Court.

The scope of the present book is suggested by the titles of the six chapters: (1) The Cult of the Robe, (2) Taft: the Court as Super-Legislature, (3) Hughes: the Court in Retreat, (4) Stone: the Court in Search of Its Role, (5) Toward Positive Responsibility, (6) By the Light of Reason.

In a world of shattering changes, the Supreme Court, normally a stabilizing force in American life, has itself been a means of smashing traditions and setting precedents.

Mr. Mason shows that in this period, when the Court and its Justices were themselves on trial during much of the time, the Court's utterances have tended to advance to judicial pre-eminence.

The book freely shows that the judicial process does not operate in a vacuum—that is, above personal and political considerations. Mr. Mason examines the philosophy and approaches of various Justices—Holmes, Taft, Hughes, Brandeis, Frankfurter, Stone, Douglas, Warren—against the background of events.

Reading the book leads to a deeper understanding of the judicial function in American political life and of the positive rule of the Supreme Court in American society.

Justice and Judaism: the Work of Social Action, by Albert Vorspan and Eugene J. Lipman. Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1956. 271 pp. \$3.50.

This important book was prepared and presented by the Commission on Social Action of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, of which the authors are staff executives.

The volume begins with a discussion of the theological bases for, and historical development of, a social action movement in Judaism and its expression on the national scene and in individual synagogues. Subsequent chapters deal with housing, education, marriage and the family,

crime and delinquency, civic reform, civil rights, civil liberties, religious liberty, interreligious activities, economic affairs, immigration, international relations. The book is in effect a comprehensive manual for social action committees of local Hebrew congregations. Like groups in the Christian community could learn a great deal from this timely, well-written, stimulating book.

Human Rights and World Order: The Struggle for Human Rights in the United Nations, by Moses Moskowitz. Oceana Publications, Inc., 1958. 239 pp. with index. \$3.95.

This important book celebrates the tenth anniversary of the proclamation by the United Nations' General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The book reviews the effort of the Human Rights Commission to provide for the implementation of the Universal Declaration and for the creation of covenants dealing with specific groups of rights. The purpose of the book, however, is not to present a description of what has been going on in the Human Rights Commission, but to consider the hard questions: *Why* have the results so far achieved been insufficient and sometimes disappointing? and *How* can better results be secured in the future? The book emphasizes and supports an idea, launched by the author several years ago and since espoused by Uruguay in the United Nations, that a special agent of the international community be designated to deal with violations of internationally guaranteed human rights and

liberties—a United Nations Attorney General for Human Rights.

The author has for twelve years been the United Nations' observer and consultant for the Consultative Council for Jewish Organizations.

This book is required reading for anyone interested in the work of the United Nations.

Foundations of the Responsible Society, by Walter G. Muelder. Abingdon Press, 1959. 304 pp. with index. \$6.00.

Dr. Muelder, Dean and Professor of Social Ethics at Boston University School of Theology, uses here an interdisciplinary approach to relate theology to philosophy, social science, and social welfare. The result is a coherent analysis of modern society against the background of Christian social thought.

The discussion deals with such subjects as: The Idea of the Responsible Society, Basic Institutions of Culture, The Responsible Family, Social Welfare and Church-State Relations, and Responsible World Community.

Foundations of the Responsible Society is a fairly comprehensive survey of Christian social ethics.

The volume is rich in reference and in quotation. It is full of useful summary statements dealing with difficult subjects—for example, an outline of communist thought; a discussion of the responsibilities of organized labor; and the listing of Protestant perspectives on the social responsibilities of business.

This book is "must" reading for students and doers in Christian social education and action.



Echoes



Dear Sir:

I congratulate you on your February, 1959, issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS*, and wish I could provide a copy to each minister, priest, and rabbi in my city.

As a Presbyterian (though a recent one), I hope our church expands its interest in socially responsible American labor. Many workers are puzzled, I believe, by what appears to be disinterest in, or a lack of sympathy with, their economic and social objectives.

The United Presbyterian Church must guard against the danger that its traditionally middle-class membership (your description) may feel responsible to educate the "upwardly mobile" industrial worker to "take on the social attitudes and aspirations of the older middle class."

We will always have varying income levels, but we must seek to attain social equality without respect to income. I'm sure that Jesus, a carpenter, would agree.

—*Oliver W. Singleton, Director
AFL-CIO Region 4
Baltimore, Maryland*

Dear Sir:

I am pleased (and in no little measure surprised) by the quality of my first issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS* (February, 1959). I don't like to fall into the disturbing category of the

"everyone" that seems to like you these days since this is usually not a good sign. Nevertheless, I think your coverage of the labor problems was good, and I hope the following issues of the magazine are equally as lucid and to the point.

—*Donald L. Metz
Cambridge, Massachusetts*

Dear Sir:

The February issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS* is a very excellent piece of work. It constitutes a solid beginning in a long task of re-education for Presbyterian clergy and laity alike.

I write, however, not to praise Caesar but to criticize a small part of this excellent work. The section entitled "Worship Resources" with its "House Service of Prayer and Meditation—for Workers and Their Families" raises serious problems.

To begin with, the text and literate flow of language in this worship service lead me to wonder if you intend the service as one to be conducted in "typical" Presbyterian middle- and upper-class homes for workers and their families! I trust your department well enough to be sure this is not the intention of the title. But, let us be quick to face the fact that this is the only way the service you have printed could be used. Its level of sophistication, the involved style of writing (excellent on

its own level), and, above all else, the mere vocabulary used render this service impossible for workers and their families. Of course there are groups of working people who would be an exception. But SOCIAL PROGRESS appears to me to have illustrated, in this service, the analysis of Presbyterian attitude contained in the February issue.

The vast majority of wage earners in the United States would have difficulty with:

myriad	redemptively
vistas	secularity
incarnate	institutional
domestic	church
disobedience	vanguard
nonchalance	incisiveness
despoils	incarcerate

The important thing about my letter is simply that I, who work all the time with low education working people, probably could not have written a better service. Its basic feeling is right and its theology is excellent. But it, like most of my services, does not come even close to being communication between the writer and the average American wage earner. Give my glossary of terms to your writer and make him do it again. If he thinks I am wrong, buy him a train ticket to Lehigh, Pennsylvania, and we will have a little experiment out here.

—Charles W. Rawling
Lehigh, Pennsylvania

Dear Sir:

Thanks for the February issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS. I think the background statement on the labor story is very useful, for it is a picture that the average person does not have. I liked especially the spirit of the ar-

ticle on "United Presbyterians and Organized Labor," for it did not beat the upper middle-class over the head as most of us frequently do in discussing this subject. I think we may want to order some copies of these later on for our own use. I think I told you that our office has been asked to discover why, if it is true, we are not ministering to the laboring group.

—Miriam R. Corbett
Council on Christian Social
Progress, The American
Baptist Convention
New York, New York

Dear Sir:

I feel that SEA, especially in its publications, overplays the separation of the church and labor. I have just been reading "The Labor Saga" and again the impression is given that the church is only white-collar middle class. I believe that this is a false picture from the imagination of those who are overly zealous in social progress. My own experience has not proved this separation to be existent other than in such articles.

My father's church in Holland, Michigan, was about two thirds factory laboring men. Our Presbyterian churches here in Flint are closely one half laboring men; and, in some instances, the percentage would run nearer to 90 per cent.

I do not believe that this constant emphasis does any one any good. Pretty soon we may begin to believe that there is such a gulf, and then find it to be true because it has developed as the result of the constant emphasis.

—Charles J. Stoppels
Flint, Michigan

Dear Sir:

I was deeply moved by your courage to force our church to own up to the labor problem. It is something, as you suggested, our church should have faced up to many years ago.

However, as I read your articles I felt that what you were saying was behind the times. Forty years ago your statement would have made sense, and should have been expressed. Now I realize that your comments were probably intended for the church at large, and, therefore, had to be in this nature of general statements. But I would take issue even with rationalization, since it only plays into the hands of the conservative element.

For instance, is it not true that *labor's problems* are much more complex than you stated? The impression received from your article was that labor's problems are still vertical, i.e., a class conflict between labor and management. Whereas, if I understand the issues, the problems are not vertical, but horizontal, i.e., industries against industries, i.e., hotels vs. motels, laundries vs. drip-dry materials, frozen foods vs. restaurants, etc. Now I realize the above examples are not in the "crucial industries," but they give indications toward the future.

This letter is not so much a "letter to the editor" as it is a good chance to put some ideas down on paper.

—William R. Grace
Wilmington, Delaware

Dear Sir:

I have just read your February issue, and certainly want to extend congratulations for undertaking the kind of study which ought to come

before all of us in the various denominations. I would like to have permission to reprint some portions in our *Religion and Labor*.

I particularly liked the emphasis at the bottom of page 9 on the lack of current understanding of such management oppression as that disclosed by the LaFollette Committee. On page 12, column 2, recognition of the purge of communism before the McCarthy era is also something which has escaped many otherwise well informed people. The entire article on the Presbyterians and organized labor is of genuine value to me, since it sets forth the denominational background in more detail than I have previously had it before me.

At the same time, I hope you will not mind my pointing to three or four spots which I also noted in a somewhat critical vein. I would have wished that the comments on the Haymarket Riot included the very great doubt concerning responsibility of those who were convicted for the affair itself.

On page 8, there is a misprint in the fifth line which gives 1844 instead of 1894 for the Pullman strike. Also, I would question the perspective implied as to Debs versus Gompers, at least without more emphasis on the socialist view of Debs as a strong factor in Gompers' view of the strike.

I have hesitated to mention these minor dissents because of the total excellence of the issue.

—Clair M. Cook
Religion and Labor Foundation
Columbus 14, Ohio

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you for the correction.

EVENTS

Synods, presbyteries, presbyterials, youth groups, men's groups, etc., are invited to use this column to list SEA events.

To list dates or to secure information concerning any date or emphasis listed, except as otherwise directed, write to: Events, Department of Social Education and Action, Board of Christian Education, The United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

April

- 27-30** World Affairs Seminar, Washington, D.C., and United Nations, New York, N.Y.
- 28-29** SEA Section, Church Officer Training Seminar, Storm Lake, Iowa
- 30 to May 1** National Conference on International Economic and Social Development, Washington, D.C.
(Write to Director, 1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington 5, D.C.)

May

- 1** Deadline for submitting essays to local churches for essay section of the 1959 Essay and Poster Competition for United Presbyterian Youth
- 1** May Fellowship Day
(Write to United Church Women, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.)
- 3** Rural Life Sunday
(Write to Department of Town and Country Church, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.)
- 4-5** SEA Section, United Christian Education Institute, Ghost Ranch, N. Mex.
- 6** SEA Workshop, Presbytery and Synod Leaders, Phoenix, Ariz.
- 7** SEA Workshop, Southern Arizona Presbytery, Phoenix, Ariz.
- 16** SEA Workshop, Chicago Presbytery
- 20-27** 171st General Assembly, Indianapolis, Ind.
- 24-30** SEA Section, Alaska Synod School, Haines, Alaska
- 26** Report of the Standing Committee on Social Education and Action at General Assembly
- 26-28** Church Conference on Social Work, San Francisco, Calif.
(Write to Department of Social Welfare, National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.)

June

- June 1959** A co-ordinated emphasis on "Christian Responsibility and International Affairs"
- June 1960** Ministers-in-Industry project of the Presbyterian Institute of Industrial Relations, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.
(Write to Director, 800 West Belden Avenue, Chicago 14, Ill.)
- June 4 to Aug. 9**
- 7-20** SEA Section, School of the South, Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.



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in the context of his ultimate need
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scales of justice, the loaves and
fishes of daily sustenance, the
alpha and omega of the Word—
all in the light of the cross.

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